

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Project Name:	Infrastructure Improvements/Rentschler Field Development
Sponsoring Agency:	Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development
Participating Agency:	Connecticut Office of Policy and Management
Prepared By:	Baystate Environmental Consultants, Inc.
Date:	October 2006

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### Introduction

The Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) has initiated steps to provide state funding for the design and construction of transportation improvements in and around Rentschler Field in East Hartford, Connecticut. These improvements have the potential for causing significant direct and indirect environmental impacts; therefore, the preparation of an Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE) is required in accordance with Section 22a-1 to 22a-1h of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS). This section of the CGS is known as the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA).

The CEPA process was initiated with a Notice of Scoping in the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) Environmental Monitor web site on July 19, 2005. A public scoping meeting was conducted at East Hartford Town Hall on August 9, 2005. The scoping comment period ended on August 18, 2005. Comments received during the scoping period, including public comments heard at the scoping meeting, were compiled and formed the basis for the content of the EIE.

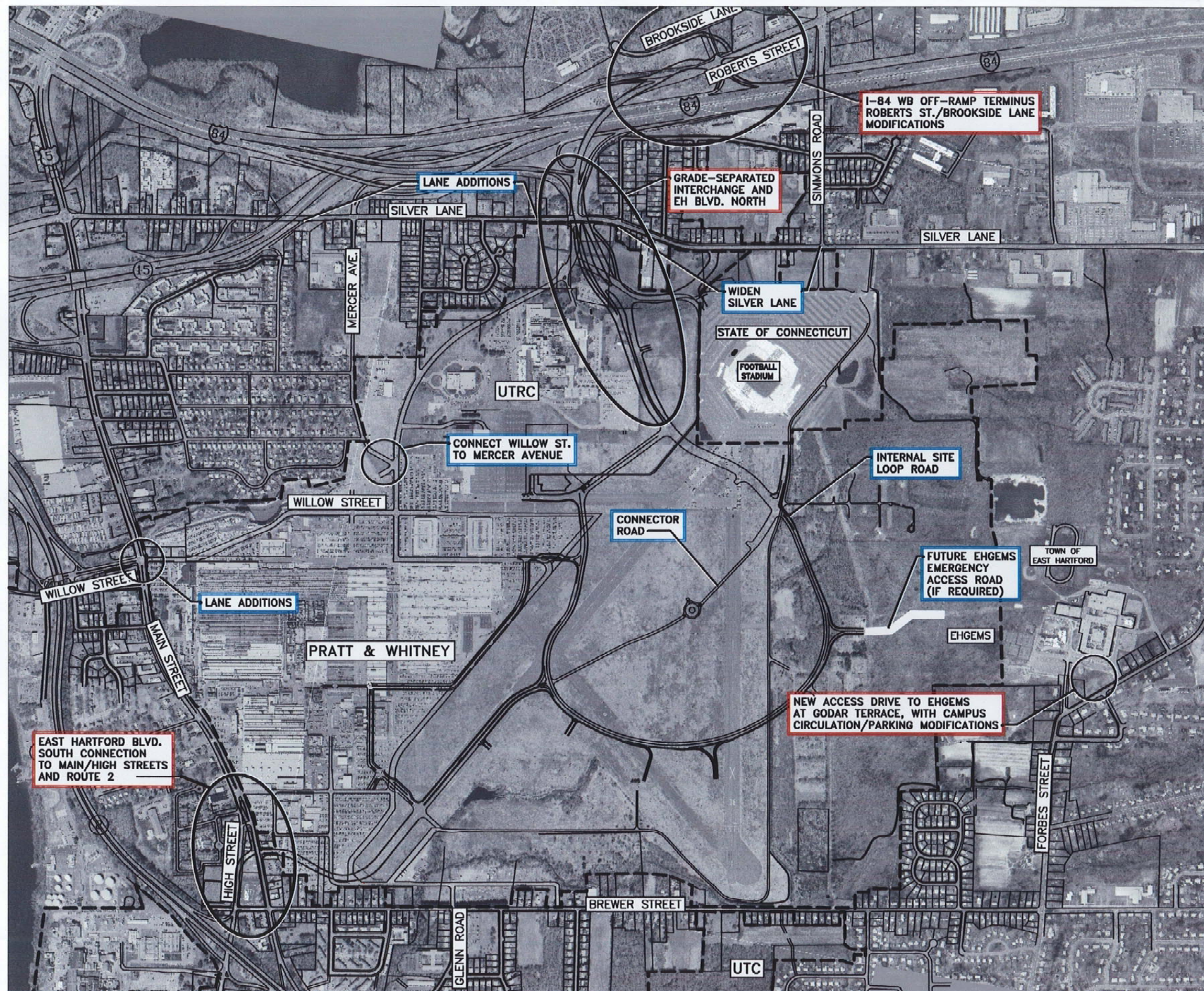
### Description of the Proposed Action

The Proposed Action consists of five state-funded activities:

1. Construction of long term transportation improvements at the Roberts Street/Silver Lane/East Hartford Boulevard North intersection;
2. Construction of long term transportation improvements at the I-84 westbound off ramp at Roberts Street;
3. Construction of long term transportation improvements in the Route 2/Brewer/Main/High Streets/East Hartford Boulevard North area;
4. Development of existing United Technologies Corporation (UTC) land as permanent Stadium parking areas; and
5. Construction of an access road leading to the new East Hartford-Glastonbury Elementary Magnet School (EHGEMS).

These proposed activities are depicted in Figure ES-1. A general layout of the preferred alternatives for the northern (Roberts Street/Silver Lane/I-84 ramps) and southern (Route 2/Main/High/Brewer Streets/East Hartford Boulevard North areas) are depicted in Figures ES-2 and ES-3. The State may also provide funding for certain on-site public infrastructure improvements including the connection of Mercer Avenue to UTC property.





# LEGEND

----- UTC PROPERTY BOUNDARY

STATE-FUNDED  
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

PRIVATELY-FUNDED  
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

NOTE: SEE FIGURES 1.2.1-2 THROUGH 1.2.1-9  
FOR MORE DETAIL ON EACH IMPROVEMENT AREA.

AERIAL PHOTO (SBC, 2002 AND COL-EAST, 2005)

**INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT/  
RENTSCHLER FIELD DEVELOPMENT  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT EVALUATION  
EAST HARTFORD, CT**

SCALE  
1" = 1000'  
DATE  
AUGUST 2006

**FIGURE ES-1  
FULL BUILD  
MASTER TRANSPORTATION PLAN**





<b>INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT/ RENTSCHLER FIELD DEVELOPMENT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT EVALUATION EAST HARTFORD, CT</b>	SCALE 1" = 400'
	DATE SEPT. 2006

**FIGURE ES-2  
ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS AT  
SILVER LN, ROBERTS ST, AND E.H. BLVD.**





**INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT/  
RENTSCHLER FIELD DEVELOPMENT  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT EVALUATION  
EAST HARTFORD, CT**

SCALE  
1" = 400'  
DATE  
SEPT. 2006

**FIGURE ES-3  
ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS AT HIGH ST,  
MAIN ST, BREWER ST, AND E.H. BLVD. S.**



### **Purpose and Need**

The purpose of Items 1-3 above is to provide safe and efficient access to the undeveloped portions of Rentschler Field to stimulate economic development. One of the primary missions of DECD is to facilitate economic growth through the funding and construction of infrastructure needed to support such development. Emphasis is placed on sites which are prime for redevelopment in economically distressed areas such as East Hartford. The proposed transportation improvements are necessary to support approximately 5.7 million sf of mixed use development at a former airport that is currently underutilized. Such a development would create new jobs and substantially add to the gross regional/state product and the tax base of the Town of East Hartford.

The economic impact of the proposed Rentschler Field development to the State of Connecticut and Hartford County, in particular, is significant. The proposed 5.7 million sf of development is forecasted to support approximately 14,700 jobs on-site. In terms of net jobs to the region, from 2007 to 2026 it is estimated that, in any given year, 4,390 net new jobs will have been created as a result of the development. This includes direct jobs (on-site), indirect jobs (off-site) and construction jobs. The project will increase the Gross Regional Product by \$4.1 billion within Hartford County, averaging \$392.7 million per year over baseline projections for the region. New local tax revenues are expected to average \$22.7 million annually, with much of this accruing to the Town of East Hartford.

The proposed transportation improvements are needed to provide adequate traffic flow to/from Rentschler Field to facilitate its development. The first phase of development proposed by UTC, the Rentschler Field property owner, and its developer, The Matos Group (TMG), includes approximately 900,000 sf of mixed use that can be accommodated with relatively minor roadway improvements at the Roberts Street/Silver Lane intersection. Development beyond this initial phase of development would result in Level of Service (LOS) deficiencies at many of the critical intersections and roadway segments in the project area, therefore, more substantial roadway improvements would be needed over time. As the project approaches full build, the construction of a grade-separated (flyover) intersection at Roberts Street/Silver Lane/EH Boulevard North will be needed. Upon completion of the first phase, a direct connection from the development to Main and High Streets in the southern portion of the project area will be required to permit development to continue.

The Proposed Action also includes the development of permanent Stadium parking areas on existing UTC-owned land (Item 4). The development of Rentschler Field will impact existing areas used for Stadium parking, namely the existing runways and the grass fields to the immediate west of the Stadium. Therefore, parking must be provided in other areas proximal to the Stadium to allow for site development and Stadium parking to co-exist.

Item 5 involves the need for transportation and utility access to and from a new proposed magnet school to be located to the west of the existing East Hartford High School (EHHS) and Connecticut International Baccalaureate Academy (CIBA) which will also be funded by the State. The preferred access to the magnet school is from Forbes Street through the existing EHHS/CIBA campus. Alternative access routes were evaluated as presented in Section 2.

### **Alternatives Considered**

Alternatives to each of the five state-sponsored activities were explored in depth. Over the course of approximately 2 years, numerous alternatives were developed and evaluated in close coordination with the appropriate state and federal agencies including: Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT); Connecticut State Traffic Commission (STC); Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP); Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM); and, the Town of East Hartford.



The criteria for selection of the preferred alternative for each of the state-sponsored activities are summarized below. Section 2 of the EIE provides maps and descriptions of each alternative and their relative merits relative to the stated goals and criteria.

*Roberts Street/Silver Lane Intersection and Route 2/Brewer/Main/ High Streets Area*

Numerous designs for a new grade-separated intersection at Roberts Street/Silver Lane and a southern connection from Rentschler Field to Main Street and Route 2 were investigated over a 2-year span. Design concepts were developed in conjunction with DOT to achieve the following goals:

- Accommodate existing and proposed traffic involving approximately 5.7 million square feet of mixed use development at Rentschler Field;
- Improve Stadium generated traffic flow so as to minimize the amount of temporary controls needed during events;
- Allow for traffic flow that does not significantly impact mainline I-84 in the area; and
- Avoid and/or minimize environmental impacts to the surrounding neighborhood and the project area.

*I-84 Westbound Off Ramp at Roberts Street*

The I-84 westbound off ramp has been designed to minimize wetland and property impacts; nevertheless both are unavoidable given the proximity to these resources. An alternative to realigning the off-ramp would be to create a triple left turn from the ramp to Roberts Street. This would create additional storage on the ramp, which is needed to avoid impacts to I-84 mainline. This was deemed unacceptable to DOT because of safety concerns, particularly weaving traffic patterns on Roberts Street.

*Route 2/Main/High/Brewer Streets Area*

Over the same two year period, numerous alternatives were evaluated to provide a direct connection from the proposed Rentschler Field Development to the main roadway system in the southern portion of the project area. Design concepts were developed to achieve the following goals:

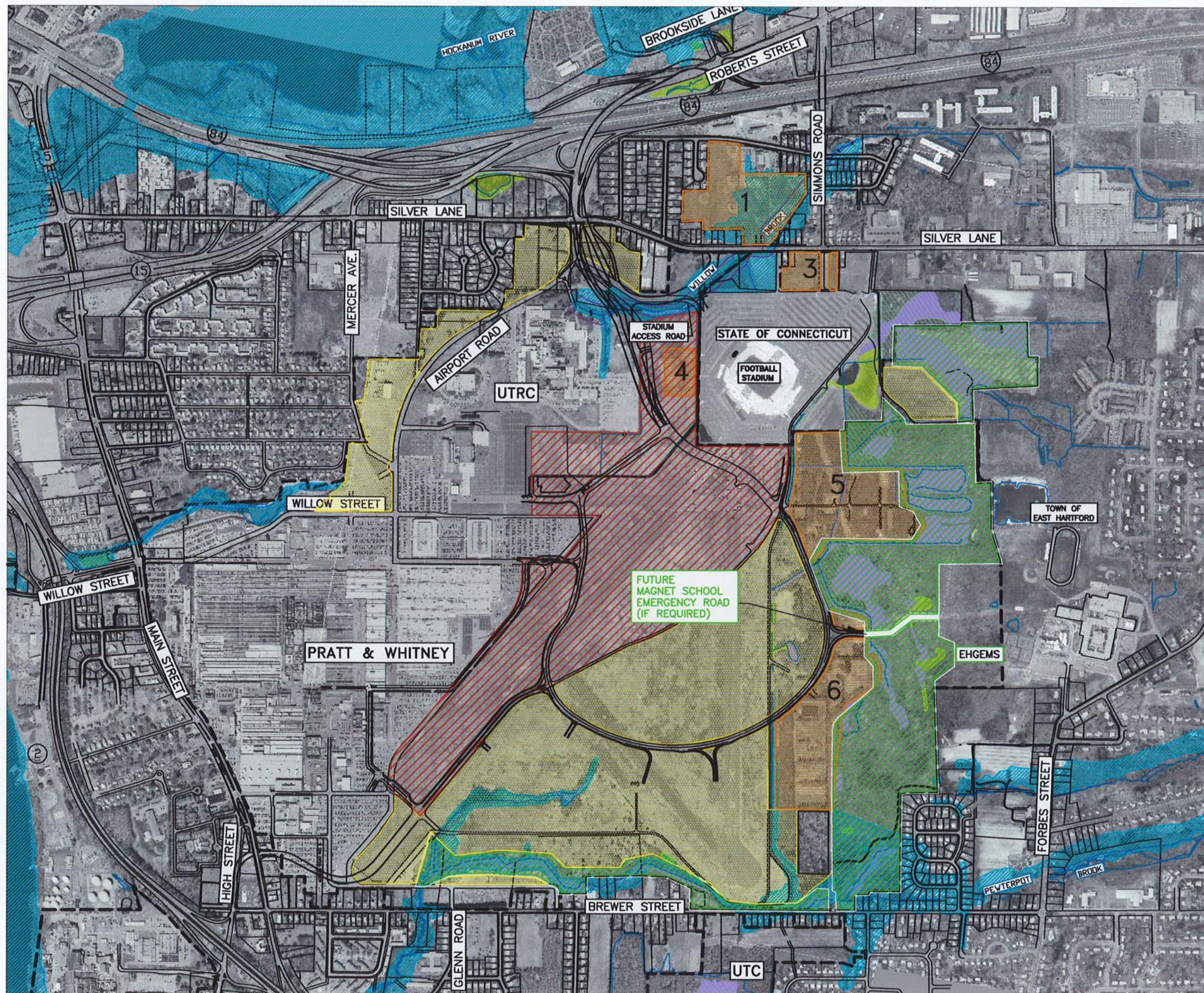
- Accommodate existing and proposed traffic involving approximately 5.7 million square feet of mixed use development at Rentschler Field;
- Provide a southern access for Stadium events to alleviate event traffic at the northern connection;
- Allow for traffic flow that does not significantly impact mainline Route 2 in the area; and
- Avoid and/or minimize environmental impacts to the surrounding neighborhood and the project area.

*Stadium Parking Plan*

The Stadium Parking Plan was developed through a coordinated effort between OPM, UTC, TMG and DEP. It is integrally linked to the proposed Rentschler Field Master Plan as proposed by TMG. The goal of the Plan is to designate areas for future Stadium parking so that the Stadium and the proposed site development can co-exist. The Parking Plan (Figure ES-4) represents a "snapshot" of where parking will be provided when the site development has been completed. Because site development will occur in phases, updated Stadium parking plans will be developed as needed to adapt to the ongoing construction. However, in general, approximately 65 acres of usable parking area needs to be maintained at all times for the Stadium (exclusive of existing dedicated parking around the Stadium proper).

Alternatives considered included the use of extensive shared parking between proposed future owners/tenants of the development and OPM. Due to the uncertainty of the future needs and uses of the proposed development, shared parking could not be guaranteed to the Stadium, therefore extensive amounts of shared parking was deemed infeasible. However, the proposed





# LEGEND

- UTC PROPERTY BOUNDARY
- OTHER PROPERTY BOUNDARY (MDC)
- WETLANDS – STATE & FEDERAL (1998)
- WETLANDS – STATE ONLY (TOWN APPROVED, 1998)
- WETLANDS – ESTIMATED BY BEC, 2005
- 100-YEAR FLOODPLAIN (CTGIS)
- FLOODWAY BOUNDARY (CTGIS)
- PHASE 1 DEVELOPMENT AREAS
- SUBSEQUENT PHASES DEVELOPMENT AREAS
- AREA BEING CONSIDERED FOR PRESERVATION
- 5 FUTURE STADIUM PARKING AREAS

SOURCE: ADAPTED FROM TMG, 2006.  
NOTE: DOES NOT DEPICT OFF-SITE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS.  
AERIAL PHOTO (SBC, 2002 AND COL-EAST, 2005)

<b>INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT/ RENTSCHLER FIELD DEVELOPMENT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT EVALUATION EAST HARTFORD, CT</b>	SCALE 1" = 1000'
	DATE AUGUST 2006

**FIGURE ES-4  
RENTSCHLER FIELD MASTER PLAN  
& FUTURE STADIUM PARKING**



Stadium Parking Plan may include some shared parking in Area 4, pending further negotiation between OPM and UTC.

#### *EHGEMS Access Plan*

A total of 5 general alternative access routes to the proposed EHGEMS were evaluated. These included: potential access from the proposed internal loop road at Rentschler Field; use of the abandoned UTC road from Brewer Street; and, use of Forbes Street access at the existing EHHS and CIBA. The first two alternatives would result in impacts to forested wetlands as well as habitat for the eastern box turtle, a State Species of Special Concern. Also, the proposed roadways would traverse areas of potential soil and/or groundwater contamination. Due to these environmental constraints and the significant environmental permitting that would be needed to construct these access roads, a proposed access drive from Forbes Street was determined to be the preferred alternative. The alternative access routes were presented at a public informational meeting held at CIBA and a public hearing held at the East Hartford Town Hall. Following these meetings, on July 11, 2006, the Town Council rescinded a January 2004 motion that disallowed any new access along Forbes Street for a new school near the High School. The Council adopted the preferred access plan as presented at the two meetings with several recommendations that will be investigated/implemented during the design phase of the project (Figure ES-5).

#### *Indirect Actions*

The indirect actions are those activities that are not state-sponsored; nevertheless they need to be evaluated in the EIE. The principal indirect action is the proposed redevelopment of Rentschler Field. The indirect actions and their impacts and mitigation are presented in detail in this EIE. Approximately 5.7 million sf of mixed use development consisting of retail, office, research & development, entertainment, recreation, and institutional uses is proposed by TMG as part of its Rentschler Field Master Plan (Figure ES-4). TMG has received Town Planning and Zoning Approval for the rezoning of Rentschler Field to Design Development District (DDD) which allows for mixed use development and flexibility in design.

Other indirect actions included privately-funded transportation improvements that are needed to support full build development. They are shown in Figure ES-1 and include, in addition to the proposed internal loop roadway system,:

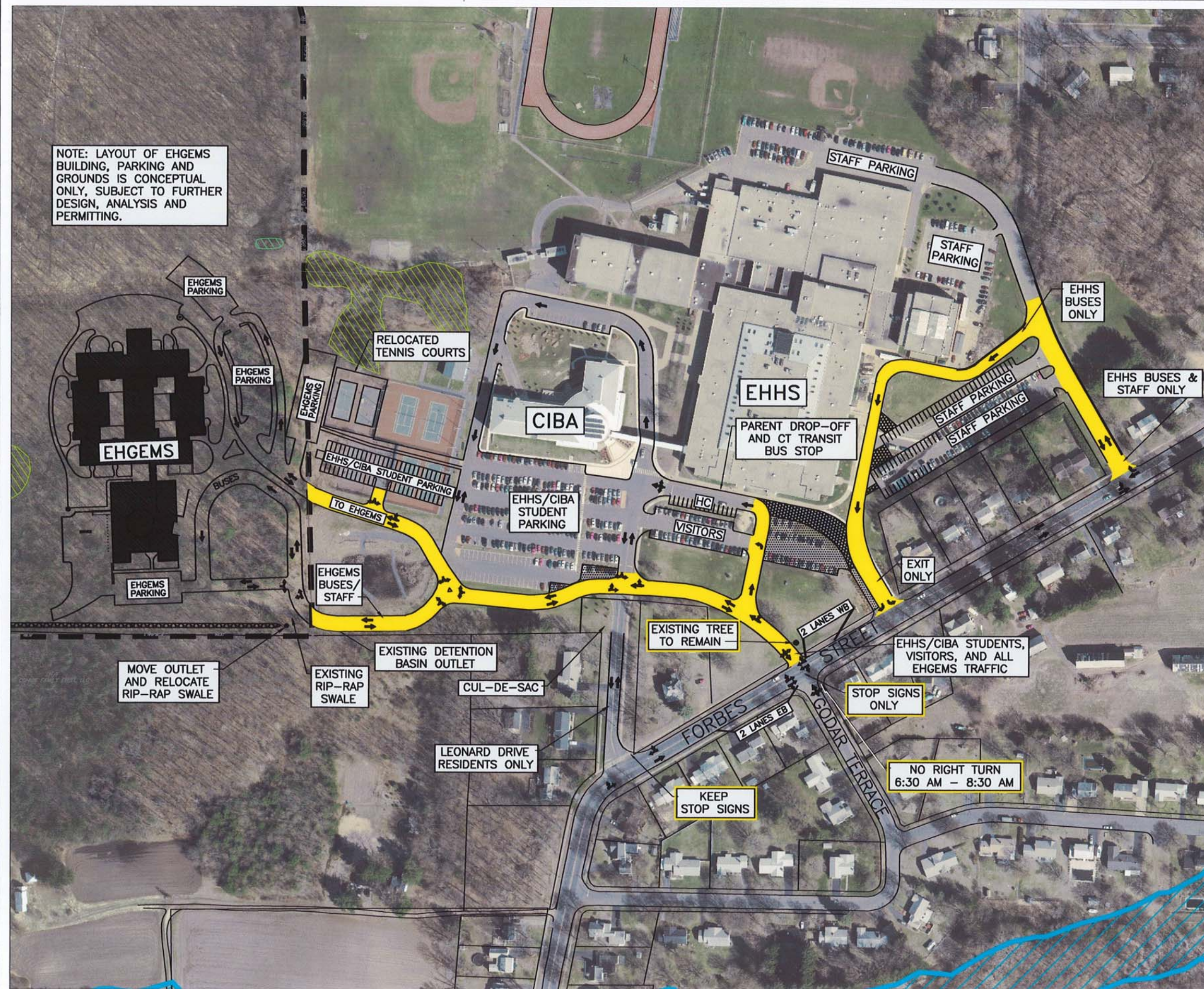
- Lane additions on Silver Lane from the Route 15 ramps to Simmons Road;
- New connection from Willow Street to Mercer Avenue to facilitate I-84 HOV lane usage; and,
- Lane additions at the Main Street/Willow Street intersection.

#### **Environmental Impacts and Mitigation**

The environmental impacts of the Proposed Action (i.e. the five state-sponsored activities) have been evaluated in this EIE. In addition, as required by CEPA, the indirect impacts of the Proposed Action have been evaluated. Indirect impacts are those that occur as a result of the Proposed Action by the State. In this case, the state-sponsored transportation improvements will enable the development of the rest of Rentschler Field by providing the necessary transportation access and capacity to the future development site. Indirect impacts are those impacts that will occur as a result of the development of Rentschler Field. Therefore, the indirect impacts are fully presented in this EIE.

Because the spatial and temporal scale of the Proposed Action and the associated Rentschler Field site development is so large, a macroscale "snapshot" approach was used to describe the impacts that would occur over the life of the project, estimated at the year 2020. In addition, the details of the indirect development of Rentschler Field cannot be known at this time as the specific nature and the project will develop over time as a function of market conditions.







The following is a synopsis of the most important environmental impacts and proposed mitigation associated with the project (direct and indirect actions). Additional detail is presented in Section 3 of the EIE. For simplicity, the impacts have been divided into two general categories, major and minor. Major impacts are those that would require substantial mitigation efforts, beyond what is typically required. Minor impacts are those that require a moderate level of mitigation that is typically required as part of other regulatory approval processes.

### Major Impacts

#### *Traffic, Parking and Circulation*

The proposed development of Rentschler Field is estimated to involve approximately 5.7 sf of mixed use development that will generate a significant amount of traffic. The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide the necessary transportation infrastructure to accommodate access to and from the site.

The site development will cause substantial increases in traffic during the AM and PM peak hours on the following roadways:

- Roberts Street;
- Silver Lane;
- Main Street; and,
- High Street.

Relatively minor increases in traffic would occur on Mercer Avenue, Brewer Street and other roads around Rentschler Field.

The increase in traffic will be mitigated by the following roadway improvements as shown in Figures ES-1, ES-2 and ES-3:

- Construction of long term transportation improvements at the Roberts Street/Silver Lane/East Hartford Boulevard North intersection;
- Construction of long term improvements at the I-84 westbound off ramp at Roberts Street;
- Construction of long term transportation improvements in the Route 2/Brewer/Main/ High Streets area;
- Lane additions at the Main Street/Willow Street intersection;
- Lane additions along Silver Lane from the Route 15 ramps to Simmons Road;
- A new connection between Willow Street and Mercer Avenue that would facilitate use of the I-84 HOV lanes.

Furthermore, the scale and density of development increases the potential for alternative transportation modes, such as bus service, to and from Rentschler Field. In response to this, Connecticut Transit Bus services will be extended to the interior of the site development. Although no funding has been secured, a proposed Hartford East Busway that could serve the development would also help to alleviate traffic in the area.

#### *Rare Species*

The proposed site development would negatively impact several state-listed birds that utilize Rentschler Field. The most notable of these species are the upland sandpiper and the grasshopper sparrow, both of which are State Endangered. These species typically require extensive open grasslands for nesting. Other state-listed species birds occur on site, however the upland sandpiper and grasshopper sparrow require the largest amount of undisturbed area, therefore these birds have been the focus of annual bird surveys over the last five years.

The eastern box turtle, a State Species of Special Concern, is known to inhabit the deciduous forest of the eastern portion of the UTC property. It is a habitat generalist in that it inhabits



forests, wetlands and fields at various stages of development. UTC and TMG are preparing a Conservation Easement Plan that would preserve a substantial portion of this habitat.

The proposed development of Rentschler Field would occur in two general phases. The first phase (Figure ES-2) would involve the construction of approximately 900,000 sf of development in the northern and western portions of Rentschler Field. Development is anticipated to occur from 2006-2008. This would negatively impact grassland bird habitat, therefore mitigation is required.

On-site mitigation was completed by TMG in March 2006 to restore the portion of Rentschler Field grassland habitat that was overgrown by shrubs and small trees. Natural succession had resulted in the conversion of the grassland fields to shrubs, which is not favorable habitat for grassland birds. The shrubs in the central and southern portions of the airfield were cut and removed from the site, thereby restoring the grassland habitat. DEP observations in 2006 confirmed that the mitigation was successful in creating additional grassland bird habitat at Rentschler Field.

Development beyond Phase 1, south of the "Connector Road", would impact the heart of the grassland bird habitat and would likely result in significant loss of grassland bird viability at Rentschler Field. Therefore, as mitigation, the State proposes to purchase property in the Connecticut River flyway that would serve as replacement habitat. The State has identified several parcels that would be suitable off-site grassland bird mitigation sites.

#### *Economics*

The economic impact of the proposed Rentschler Field to the State of Connecticut and Hartford County, in particular, is significant. The proposed 5.7 million sf of development is forecasted to support approximately 14,700 jobs on-site. Not all these jobs would be net new to the region. From 2007 to 2026 it is estimated that, in any given year, 4,390 net new jobs will have been created as a result of the development. This includes direct jobs (on-site), indirect jobs (off-site) and construction jobs. The project will increase the Gross Regional Product by \$4.1 billion within Hartford County, averaging \$392.7 million per year over baseline projections for the region. New local tax revenues are expected to average \$22.7 million annually, with much of this accruing to the Town of East Hartford.

#### *Properties*

The proposed transportation improvements at Roberts Street/Silver Lane/East Hartford Boulevard, the I-84 westbound off-ramp at Roberts Street and the North and Route 2/Brewer/Main/High Streets would require some partial and full property acquisitions.

For the Roberts Street/Silver Lane/East Hartford Boulevard North area, acquisition of a small portion of a residential property (430 Silver Lane) for roadway improvements would be required. This would affect only 5% of the total parcel area and no structures. Acquisition of a portion of the UTC property that fronts Silver Lane would also be required to accommodate the new roadway and associated features.

The proposed roadway improvements to the I-84 westbound off ramp at Roberts Street/Brookside Lane would require partial acquisition of four properties, three of which are privately owned and one of which is state-owned. None of the impacts to private properties would significantly affect the utilization of the properties; however a loss of approximately 10 parking spaces and the western driveway to Margarita's Restaurant would occur as a result of the Brookside Lane realignment.

For the Route 2/Brewer/Main/High Streets area there would be two full property acquisitions and several partial acquisitions required to implement the roadway improvements. Acquisition of the Shell Service Station at 24 High Street may be required because the transportation improvements would result in a partial property acquisition that will likely render this property unusable, therefore



a full property acquisition is likely. Further design and analysis is needed to make a definitive determination.

The other full property acquisition is the vacant parcel to the south (317 Main Street, former Seaparks Department Store) would be necessary. The nail salon located to the immediate north of Augie and Ray's Restaurant would be directly impacted by the proposed East Hartford Boulevard South connection to Main Street. This structure would need to be moved or demolished. One residential property located immediately north of the nail salon would be impacted to the degree that a full property acquisition may be required. More detailed design and analysis is needed to make a definitive determination. Other, smaller scale partial acquisitions would be needed along the west side of Main Street, none of which would affect the utilization of the properties in this area.

Property acquisitions associated with a privately-funded indirect action, the widening of Silver Lane, are more substantial. Many of the homes and commercial businesses along Silver Lane, from the Route 15 ramps to Roberts Street are close to existing road and DOT right-of-way. The traffic analysis has revealed that an additional lane is needed to accommodate full build traffic volumes. This would result in many small-scale property acquisitions in the front yards of residences and businesses along Silver Lane. Most of these impacts would not affect the utilization of the properties; however there are four businesses and two residences that could be negatively affected by the lane addition. Mitigation for these impacts would be required and may include one or more of the following: full property acquisition; physical movement of residences further back into the property; and, replacement of lost parking spaces for the four commercial properties.

#### *Contaminated Materials*

Contaminated soil and groundwater is present on the existing Rentschler Field site. Studies done by UTC have revealed several areas of concern that require additional investigation and/or remediation in order to allow for development of the land. These areas are primarily located in the southern end of the property, near Pewterpot Brook and the eastern portion of the property where future Stadium parking is proposed.

There are approximately 18 properties that have a moderate or high risk of containing contaminated soil or groundwater along Silver Lane, Roberts Street, Main Street, and High Street that could be impacted by the proposed roadway improvements. Additional investigation will be required for these properties in accordance with applicable state and federal regulations.

#### *Wetlands*

The construction of the new grade-separated intersection at Roberts Street and Silver Lane will involve the crossing of riparian wetlands associated with Willow Brook. The concept plan calls for spanning the entire wetland, therefore no significant direct impacts to the wetlands are expected.

The improvements to the I-84 westbound off ramp at Roberts Street/Brookside Lane would impact approximately 45,000 sf of wetlands. This would be mitigated by replacing the lost wetlands to the immediate west of the existing wetland on state-owned property.

There are no wetlands associated with the construction of the transportation improvements at the Route 2/Brewer/Main/High Streets area. There will be no direct impacts to wetlands associated with the transportation access to/from the EHGEMS.

The proposed Rentschler Field site development may directly impact wetlands along the southern and eastern margins of the former airfield. The eastern portion of the proposed loop road, as currently designed, would cross an existing channelized watercourse that drains wetlands from the northeastern corner of the UTC property. A complete design of this crossing has not been made by UTC's developer, TMG; therefore impacts cannot be quantified at this time. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and the DEP have directed TMG to investigate the feasibility of



avoiding the crossing altogether or completely spanning the channel to minimize impacts to wetlands.

TMG and the ACOE are currently engaged in an effort to preserve a large expanse of the eastern portion of the UTC property for permanent protection through a conservation easement or other legal mechanism. The eastern portion of the UTC property contains a mosaic of forested wetlands and deciduous upland forest that is a valuable wildlife corridor. When implemented, there would be a total of approximately 130 acres of permanently protected open space, much of which is forested wetland.

#### *Flood Zones*

The construction of the new grade-separated intersection at Roberts Street and Silver Lane would entail the crossing of a floodway and floodplain associated with Willow Brook. TMG is currently conducting the hydrologic and hydraulic analyses to demonstrate that the existing flood zones, as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), are inaccurate (i.e. overstated). Formal redesignation of the flood zones is proposed which would likely minimize the impacts.

The I-84 westbound off ramp at Roberts Street has the potential to impact a minimal area of the 100-year floodplain. Additional mapping and analysis will be conducted during the design phase to determine the exact extent of the 100-year floodplain and the impact of construction on flood storage (if any).

None of the other state-sponsored activities would encroach upon regulated flood zones.

The proposed Rentschler Field development has the potential to impact flood zones associated with Willow Brook or Pewterpot Brook. Currently, the internal road system proposed by TMG does not encroach on flood zones, however building pads along the southern end of the road could encroach upon flood zones of Pewterpot Brook.

Any such development would need to comply with East Hartford Planning and Zoning requirements for impacts to floodways or floodplains. Any activity that involves state funding would also need to comply with Section 25-68 of the CGS to obtain Flood Management Certification.

#### Minor Impacts

##### *Air Quality*

Air quality impacts from increased motor vehicle traffic are expected to be minor. No exceedances of the EPA criteria for carbon monoxide are expected at the most heavily traveled intersections in the study area. On a regional basis, the development of Rentschler Field with the proposed roadway improvements would result in a decrease in pollutant emissions, therefore it will conform to the State Implementation Plan.

Construction at Rentschler Field could result in increased dust emissions and transport to off-site properties. During construction, this will be mitigated by the use of water application, fencing and limiting the amount of exposed earth at any one time.

##### *Noise*

The proposed roadway improvements would increase noise levels in the Silver Lane and Main Street areas. However, only one noise receptor, a residence on Main Street (#326) north of Augie and Ray's Restaurant would exceed the FHWA and DOT noise criteria for noise. Mitigation for this impact can be achieved by one or more of the following: shifting the entrance approximately 20 feet further south; installation of new acoustical windows, insulation and air conditioning; or, acquisition of the property. The installation of a noise barrier may offer some attenuation to residents of this property as well, however its effectiveness for noise attenuation for



the second and third stories of the structure would be limited. These mitigation options will be evaluated in greater detail during the design phase of the project.

#### *Solid Waste and Recycling*

The Proposed Action will generate solid waste in the form of pavement, soil, used utility structures and grass/trees. These materials will be either re-used on-site, if suitable, or hauled off-site to be reused by others or discarded as solid waste in accordance with applicable local and state regulations.

The development of Rentschler Field will generate solid waste during construction and operation of the new facilities. Solid waste will be managed in accordance with applicable local and state regulations.

#### *Aesthetics/Viewsheds*

The new grade-separated intersection at Roberts Street and Silver Lane will affect the viewshed of some residents and businesses along Silver Lane from approximately Mercer Avenue to Clement Road. The new view to the intersection would be of a 25 feet high bridge over Silver Lane. This is a negative aesthetic impact that will be addressed in the design process. Special consideration will be given to the architectural treatment of the bridge fascia.

The proposed improvements at the Route 2/Brewer/Main/High Street area will not negatively affect the aesthetics of the area. This area is currently industrial/commercial in nature; therefore the modifications to the roadway system in this area should not negatively affect aesthetics or viewsheds.

The proposed site development will alter the view of the existing Rentschler Field. Multi-story structures are allowed within the DDD and, if constructed, would be visible from residences in the area and motorists along I-84. The architectural design of the structures and supporting infrastructure will contain thematic elements that are complementary, thereby creating a cohesive and coordinated overall appearance.

#### *Historic and Archaeological Resources*

The new grade-separated intersection at Roberts Street and Silver Lane will not directly impact any historic structure. However, ancillary widening of Silver Lane in this area and along Silver Lane from the Route 15 ramps to Simmons Road could result in a nominal encroachment on the front yards of some properties that are currently listed or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. There is the potential for encountering artifacts in these areas. Additional studies (Phase 1B) will be conducted in coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

The development of Rentschler Field will occur in areas that have moderate to high potential for containing intact archaeological resources. Phase 1B studies will be conducted in these areas and mitigation, if necessary as determined by the SHPO, will be conducted.

#### *Geology, Topography and Soils*

The five activities associated with the Proposed Action will have minimal impacts on the geology, topography or soils of the area. However, the proposed Rentschler Field development will alter the topography of Rentschler Field. In order to provide positive stormwater and sewage flow from the site to Silver Lane and/or Brewer Street, much of the site would need to be elevated. TMG is developing a master grading plan that is aimed at minimizing the amount of fill needed on site to reduce costs and minimize the amount of truck traffic to the site during construction.

Should varved clay be encountered during the excavation for building and utility construction, special handling of this material will be required including possible removal from the site.



### *Hydrology and Stormwater*

Stormwater runoff during construction and operation of the transportation improvements will be managed in accordance with the Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual and the DEP general permit conditions for stormwater discharge associated with construction activities.

Rentschler Field development projects will also be required to conform to the applicable local and state laws and regulations. The developer has prepared a draft stormwater management plan that is currently being revised. The initial plan calls for a combination of surface and subsurface detention structures with the use of infiltration for roof runoff. A combination of centralized and decentralized stormwater management structures is envisioned for the development where individual development pads would be required to accommodate a certain portion of the peak storm runoff before discharging to a common centralized stormwater system that would provide the additional necessary attenuation before discharging to Willow Brook, Pewterpot Brook or the existing P&W stormwater system.

### *Utilities*

The Proposed Action would require the relocation of existing utilities. This will be done during the design phase of the projects. Permanent lighting is proposed for the future Stadium parking areas. Electrical service will need to be provided from the Stadium or the proposed internal loop road. The requisite utilities are available at the existing EHHS/CIBA campus and along Forbes Street for the construction of the access road to EHGEMS.

The requisite utilities (sewer, water, electricity, and telecommunications) are available along Silver Lane and Brewer Street and at the Stadium. TMG will coordinate with the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), Connecticut Light and Power (CL&P) and other utilities that would service the proposed development.

### *Vegetative Communities*

The Proposed Action would not significantly alter vegetation in the project area, except for the I-84 westbound off ramp at Roberts Street where the existing forested wetland would be converted to a road (the relocated Brookside Lane).

The areas proposed for Stadium parking currently consist of asphalt pads in disrepair that have been overgrown with a sporadic mixture of shrubs and small trees. The vegetation and asphalt within these areas would be removed and replaced with turf.

The proposed Rentschler Field development would involve the conversion of approximately 300 acres of grassland and shrubland to development. The grassland will be mitigated by the State's purchase of other grasslands in the Connecticut River flyway that will be protected in perpetuity. The primary purpose of the grassland mitigation is to provide off-site mitigation for the habitat that is currently used by grassland birds at Rentschler Field.

### *Long Range State and Local Planning*

The Proposed Action would allow for large-scale development of Rentschler Field. This development is consistent with all applicable, local, regional and state plans including the State Plan of Conservation and Development and the East Hartford Plan of Conservation and Development.

### *Public Safety*

According to the Town Chief of Police, the Police Department has adequate resources to service the proposed development. The Town Fire Department has indicated that an additional fire station may be needed to service the development. The possibility of locating a new fire station within the proposed development area has been discussed between the Town and the developer, TMG.



### *Housing*

The proposed transportation improvements would result in impacts to the front yards of some residential properties on Silver Lane. Approximately 28 properties would experience nominal impacts to their front yards and two properties would be impacted to the extent that the houses may need to be relocated (within the existing property or on a new parcel).

The construction of East Hartford Boulevard South at Main Street would impact an existing multi-family home on Main Street (#326). This could be mitigated by aligning the intersection to the south by approximately 10 feet.

The proposed development would create additional housing stock for the town and the region. Approximately 192 condominium-style units are proposed as part of the Rentschler Field Master Plan.

### *Environmental Equity*

The project area is surrounded by minority and low income population enclaves, however, the Proposed Action would not result in disproportionate negative impacts to minority and low income people. The Proposed Action will enable site development to occur, thus creating additional employment opportunities for local people.

### **Potential Certificates, Permits and Approvals**

Numerous approvals at the local, state and federal level will be required for the Proposed Action and the associated Rentschler Field site development. The following are the most important approvals and their associated administering agency, many of which have a public involvement component:

- State Traffic Commission (STC) Certificate - State Traffic Commission
- Section 404 Permit - ACOE
- Section 401 Permit - DEP
- Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Permit - East Hartford Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission
- Site Plan Approval - East Hartford Planning and Zoning Commission
- Stormwater Permit Associated with Construction Activity - DEP
- Stormwater Permit Associated with Commercial/Industrial Activity - DEP

### **EIE Review and Comments**

Comments on this EIE should be directed via letter, email or fax by 4:00 PM on November 20, 2006 to:

Peter Simmons, P.E., Assistant Director  
State of Connecticut  
Department of Economic and Community Development  
Office of Infrastructure and Real Estate  
505 Hudson Street  
Hartford, CT 06106-7106

Fax: 860-270-8157  
Email: peter.simmons@po.state.ct.us

A public hearing will be conducted on Thursday, November 9 at 6:30 PM in the East Hartford Town Council Chambers at 740 Main Street, East Hartford, CT.



Responses to substantive comments received will be provided in the Record of Decision (ROD) which will be submitted to OPM. In accordance with CEPA, OPM will review the Draft EIE and the comments and responses and make a Determination of Adequacy (DOA). A positive determination will enable the release of state funding for the Proposed Action.

**Distribution**

This EIE is being distributed to the following parties:

Capitol Region Council of Governments  
Capitol Region Education Council  
Council on Environmental Quality  
Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism  
Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection  
Connecticut Department of Public Health  
Connecticut Department of Transportation  
Connecticut Office of Policy and Management  
Connecticut State Traffic Commission  
East Hartford Community Cultural Center  
Federal Highway Administration  
Mayor - Town of East Hartford  
Metropolitan District Commission  
Raymond Library, East Hartford, CT  
The Matos Group  
Town Clerk - Town of East Hartford  
Town Engineer - Town of East Hartford  
Town Planner - Town of East Hartford  
United Technologies Corporation  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Wickham Library and Literacy Center, East Hartford, CT